

URGENT DEFICIENCIES, 1918

HEARING

BEFORE THE

SUBCOMMITTEE OF HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

CONSISTING OF

MESSRS. SWAGAR SHERLEY (CHAIRMAN), JOHN J. EAGAN
THOMAS UPTON SISSON, JOSEPH G. CANNON
AND WILLIAM S. VARE

IN CHARGE OF

DEFICIENCY APPROPRIATIONS FOR THE FISCAL
YEAR 1918 AND PRIOR FISCAL YEARS

TUESDAY, *January 8, 1918.*

SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION.

(See p. 281.)

STATEMENT OF MR. WILLIAM DE C. RAVENEL, ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT, UNITED STATES NATIONAL MUSEUM.

HEATING, LIGHTING, ELECTRIC, TELEGRAPHIC, AND TELEPHONE SERVICE.

The CHAIRMAN. There is an estimate here "For heating, lighting, electrical, telegraphic, and telephonic service, \$5,674." Will you explain the reason for that?

Mr. RAVENEL. When we appeared before the committee last year in January we called attention to the fact that the appropriation would be sufficient for running another year on condition the price of coal did not advance greatly. We were then paying \$3.43 per ton, and we are now paying \$5.75 per ton, and we are getting coal with 10 per cent ash instead of 5 per cent ash, so that we are burning more coal. We are using more coal than we did a year ago from the fact the coal is not as good, in the first place, and secondly, from the fact we are obliged to produce a great deal more electrical current, and will be required to produce still more as time goes on. This increase was asked, as you can figure out very easily, on 3,000 tons, on account of an increased price of \$2.32, which would be something over \$6,000. We asked for the amount that we believed at that time would be necessary to carry us until June 30.

The CHAIRMAN. Are you charging the Treasury Department anything?

Mr. RAVENEL. We are not charging them anything, but I am sorry to say we will have to ask for an increased appropriation for next year. Our estimates call for the same amount \$46,000, but we had no conception when we made up those estimates for next year we were going to have to turn 37,000 square feet of space into office rooms.

The CHAIRMAN. Why is that going to make it necessary for you to ask for more money for the National Museum?

Mr. RAVENEL. Unless you are going to furnish the Bureau of War Risk Insurance with the money. We will furnish them next year, on the basis of the same space they occupy now, not including the rotunda and the auditorium, 100,000 kilowatt hours of electricity, and charging them at a cost of $2\frac{1}{2}$ cents per kilowatt hour, which is a very low rate. Sometimes we make the electricity for a little more than that and sometimes it is a little less; last year it was less; but at that rate it would amount to \$2,500.

The CHAIRMAN. What do you mean?

Mr. RAVENEL. Increased amount of electricity.

The CHAIRMAN. Because they are in there?

Mr. RAVENEL. Certainly. For instance, take the west range, northwest range, and foyer. None of the employees worked regularly in any of that space except during the day in the west and northwest ranges where artificial light was not required. The foyer, auditorium, and rotunda will have to be lighted artificially both day and night for

the purposes for which it is now used, whereas formerly the auditorium was only required to be lighted during the winter when used by the various societies and governmental bodies for meetings.

The CHAIRMAN. Of course, what you shall be allowed next year will be altogether dependent upon what use the Museum is put to. There are some people who consider that this is a very good time for the National Government to practice some of the thrift it advises its citizens to practice, and among other things, with space badly needed as it is now, it may be a good time to quit the Museum temporarily in order to house some of the important activities of the Government. Of course, if that view should prevail, that would involve a readjustment of all the estimates for next year.

Mr. RAVENEL. Surely.

The CHAIRMAN. How much floor space is there in the Museum?

Mr. RAVENEL. In the new building?

The CHAIRMAN. Yes.

Mr. RAVENEL. In round numbers, according to the architectural plans, there are 10 acres of space, but the machinery and the shops connected with it occupy one entire wing and another wing is occupied by the alcoholic storage.

The CHAIRMAN. Perhaps, unless you have the exact data, it is best that you do not testify from memory; but the committee would be glad to be supplied, as early as possible, with information showing the exact amount of floor space occupied normally by exhibits in the Museum or otherwise than by the employees of the Museum.

MONDAY, January 7, 1918.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE.

STATEMENTS OF HON. ROBERT LANSING, SECRETARY OF STATE, AND MR. WILBUR J. CARR, DIRECTOR OF THE CONSULAR SERVICE.

ADDITIONAL EMPLOYEES—REMOVAL OF LIMITATION AS TO AMOUNT OF COMPENSATION.

The CHAIRMAN. Mr. Secretary, you have some estimates beginning on page 8 of the bill. The first one is \$87,000 for additional employees in the Department of State, and you are asking for this language in lieu of the old proviso: "*Provided*, That the restriction as to the rate of compensation to be paid from the appropriation of \$85,000 contained in the deficiency appropriation act of October 6, 1917, is repealed."

Secretary LANSING. Yes.

The CHAIRMAN. That proviso limited you to the extent of prohibiting the employment of more than two persons at a rate of compensation exceeding \$1,800 per annum?

Secretary LANSING. Yes.

The CHAIRMAN. Will you state the occasion for this estimate and your reasons for asking the proposed change in language?

Secretary LANSING. You will recall, gentlemen, that last summer we asked for \$120,000 for additional employees, and on the pro rata basis we were allowed \$85,000 for the balance of the year, from Octo-

We are not asking for any increased appropriation. The repairs are chiefly pointing up the masonry.

THE CHAIRMAN. How are you going to get the money? You certainly did not ask for more than you needed for these other buildings, because you submitted an itemized account of what you expected to do with it. If you are now adding two buildings, where are you going to get the money?

DR. CREEL. The repairs to the buildings chiefly consist in cutting windows and erecting certain partitions.

THE CHAIRMAN. In other words, you asked enough the first time to now take care of these additional two buildings?

DR. CREEL. In so far as the repairs are not very material, we might have asked for \$5,000 more possibly, but it was felt we could make the original appropriation sufficient by reducing the size of the various new barracks, as originally estimated, the remodeled buildings making up the capacity of plant as first estimated.

TUESDAY, JANUARY 15, 1918.

SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION.

STATEMENT OF MR. CHARLES D. WALCOTT, SECRETARY, ACCOMPANIED BY MR. W. DeC. RAVENEL, ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT.

NEW NATIONAL MUSEUM, USE BY BUREAU OF WAR RISK INSURANCE.

(See pp. 40, 115, 147, 281.)

THE CHAIRMAN. Mr. Walcott, there has been a partial occupancy of the National Museum by the War Risk Insurance Bureau and there have been suggestions as to the further use of the building by that bureau. Have you a general statement you would like to make on that subject?

MR. WALCOTT. Mr. Chairman, the first grant of space to the War Risk Insurance Bureau, and then a supplementary grant made in the basement, which included one long corridor and what is called the foyer and adjoining rooms; total 37,000 square feet. That space was granted to the bureau as a war measure because it would not interfere seriously with the activities of the museum. That, however, shut out the use of the museum to the different Government bureaus which were holding their meetings and exhibits there, especially the agricultural and several other departments, and necessitated the closing up of the auditorium and the rotunda, as well as the large foyer and adjoining rooms on the basement floor, and the long corridor. To obtain the latter space, the collections of mammals belonging to the Biological Survey and to the National Museum, which were in steel cases, were removed to the second floor, filling in between the cases.

THE CHAIRMAN. Those were not on exhibition?

MR. WALCOTT. Those collections were not on exhibition. They are what we call the reference and study collections both of the Biological Survey of the Department of Agriculture and the National

Museum. I may say in this connection that the Museum cooperates with the scientific bureaus of the Government, the Department of Agriculture, and the Geological Survey in taking care of their collections, providing working laboratories for the men who are working on the collections, and in this way the Museum is benefited and the Government bureaus concerned are benefited because their collections are taken care of and made accessible. Recently there has been a very careful survey made of the exhibition space on the first and second floors above the basement, and careful measurements made to obtain data in relation to the space that could be cleared by moving the cases up together and leaving only room by which the curators and assistants could get through and along the cases in order to protect the collections. On the second floor the space that thus could be made available totals 29,900 feet. The space on the first floor totals 49,000 square feet, exclusive of the north wing, in which the art gallery is situated.

The CHAIRMAN. That is a total of 78,900 square feet?

Mr. WALCOTT. Yes.

The CHAIRMAN. And that is exclusive of any areas now occupied?

Mr. WALCOTT. Yes, sir.

The CHAIRMAN. The result of that would be, of course, to close the Museum to the public?

Mr. WALCOTT. That would close the Museum entirely to the public except possibly a passageway could be left to the art gallery from the south entrance, so if the people cared to do so they could visit the art gallery.

The CHAIRMAN. Moving the exhibits in that way would entail what, if any, risk to them?

Mr. WALCOTT. By selecting the hall or the spaces where the moving of the cases would injure their contents as the storage halls, and taking those cases where there would be relatively little danger of damaging the contents there would be comparatively little danger.

The CHAIRMAN. That would still leave that part of the building now devoted to the work of the staff available to them?

Mr. WALCOTT. That would leave that part of the building available. All these laboratories occupied by the staff are filled with collections that are under study and that is where the activities of many of the bureaus or divisions of the Agricultural Department and the Geological Survey are conducted.

The CHAIRMAN. So that the effect of this action would be, for the time it was continued, to close the Museum to the public, but not to interfere with the work of the staff of the Museum?

Mr. WALCOTT. Only in a very limited way. It might make it a little more difficult for them to get at the things, but not in an essential way.

The CHAIRMAN. What have you to say, Mr. Walcott, as to such action being taken?

Mr. WALCOTT. Mr. Chairman, I think it would be a very unfortunate thing to do, and it should only be done as a war measure and because there is no other way of accomplishing the same result in a practical manner.

The CHAIRMAN. Of course, you are aware of the need of quite a bit of increase of space in a fire-proof building by this bureau, and

you are probably also aware of the present absence of any such space in the District of Columbia?

Mr. WALCOTT. No, sir; I am not aware of the necessities of that bureau in that regard.

The CHAIRMAN. Of course, the gentlemen who are charged with the administration of the law and the running of the bureau are probably the best judges as to the amount of need they have for fire-proof space.

Mr. WALCOTT. They should be.

The CHAIRMAN. Are you questioning their judgment or simply expressing a lack of information on your part?

Mr. WALCOTT. A lack of information.

The CHAIRMAN. Assuming there was such need, do you know of any present space in Washington that would be available?

Mr. WALCOTT. Mr. Chairman, a letter which I wrote to the Secretary of the Treasury December 15, 1917, stated that in the New National Museum they then had 25,000 square feet, and to that since has been added about 12,000 square feet. In Center Market they have 15,000 square feet and in the Elks Hall on H Street there has recently been rented by the Treasury Department for this purpose 20,000 square feet, making a total of 72,000 square feet. It is further understood that certain buildings at the southwest corner of Fourteenth Street and Pennsylvania Avenue containing 21,000 square feet which are now being remodeled by the Treasury Department will be available for the bureau February 1; also, that the Merchants Transfer Co. of Washington have submitted a plan to furnish within five months, if their bid is accepted at once, a fire-proof building 8 or 10 stories high to contain 135,000 square feet of space.

The CHAIRMAN. You may not know, but it appears as a fact that the buildings which are being remodeled by the Treasury Department are expected to be taken over by the Internal-Revenue Bureau of the Treasury Department and therefore would not be available for this purpose.

Mr. RAVENEL. The information we furnished there was given me in the Treasury Department at the time that statement was made.

The CHAIRMAN. The testimony before this committee, considerably since that letter was written, as well as informal information which I have received, is that that remodeling is for the benefit of the Internal Revenue Bureau. The proposal of the Merchants Transfer Co. is simply a building proposal. I was speaking of available areas now.

Mr. WALCOTT. There is another paragraph in this letter which states that it is also reported that the new Odd Fellows Hall, located on Seventh Street between D and E Streets, containing 41,000 square feet, may be leased.

Mr. RAVENEL. That information was also given me by the Treasury Department in the Chief Clerk's office on the same date.

The CHAIRMAN. It was testified by the War Risk Insurance Bureau that they needed very speedily 135,000 square feet of space.

Mr. WALCOTT. In addition to what they have?

The CHAIRMAN. No; that was the total.

Mr. SISSON. And that was a minimum.

THE CHAIRMAN. They have now, I think, about 67,000 square feet, and about 75,000 square feet would probably take care of the situation until such time as a building could be acquired or built to deal with the fire-proof needs of the bureau. What we would like to have, Mr. Walcott, is such further statement as you may care to make in opposition to such action touching the Museum as would result practically in closing it to the public as an exhibition place.

MR. WALCOTT. Of course if this action is taken it will close the Museum.

THE CHAIRMAN. We would like to have such reasons as you may desire to advance why such action as would close it should not be taken.

MR. WALCOTT. Mr. Chairman, if it is a war necessity I do not think there are any reasons which could be given.

THE CHAIRMAN. Well, here is a bureau which needs fire-proof space for its records. I suppose you recognize the fact that the records of a bureau of this kind should be safeguarded perhaps more than the records of any other bureau of the Government.

MR. WALCOTT. Yes, sir; but I do not know but that the space they already have would be sufficient to guard those records.

THE CHAIRMAN. They must be used as well as guarded. It does not mean to simply store them. They are records that have to be used every day, and therefore must be available. Now, this committee has had put up to it the need of supplying this bureau with space. It would not like to take the Museum space unless it had to, and I am sure Congress would not want to do it unless it felt compelled to do so. We would be glad to have any suggested solution from you, as it is not a question of what we can do five or six months from now, but what we can do now.

MR. WALCOTT. Mr. Chairman, I can not give you a suggested solution of it at the moment without thoroughly going into the question of what may be available or may not be available. The same bureau told us in November that there was no other space available, and again in December, and space was found. Whether space of a fireproof character to answer their purposes could be found or not, I do not know.

THE CHAIRMAN. What space in addition to what you have already given to them could be given without seriously interfering with the use of the Museum by the public—any?

MR. RAVENEL. You have it right there, the two floors that are occupied for exhibition purposes, and that is putting the cases in those floors as close together as possible. We have allowed no margin except the smallest amount of space to pass through there.

THE CHAIRMAN. You perhaps did not gather the purport of my question. I understand that 78,000 square feet of floor space could be obtained by closing the Museum to the public, and that represents the maximum, according to your testimony, if you do not include the art gallery, which would still be left open to the public under that arrangement. Now, I inquired as to what amount of space might be made available for the bureau without seriously interfering with the use of the Museum by the public. Of course, it would interfere in some regard, but you have a number of exhibits there which perhaps are of less general interest and importance now than others,

and conceivably it might be possible to take some portion of the space there, and, while to that extent interfering with its use by the public, still leave a very great part of the Museum open to the public.

Mr. WALCOTT. Mr. Chairman, the second floor could be closed, and that would give 29,900 square feet, and that would leave the first floor practically open, except the rotunda.

The CHAIRMAN. What would be the attitude of the Museum touching that, as a matter of five or six months' occupancy?

Mr. WALCOTT. Mr. Chairman, you would have a large force there as a practical thing; there are no toilet facilities on that floor, and you would have 600 clerks working in there night and day who would have the run of the entire building. You could not shut it off.

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 9, 1918.

SECRET SERVICE DIVISION, TREASURY DEPARTMENT.

STATEMENT OF MR. W. H. MORAN, CHIEF.

ADDITIONAL CLERKS.

Mr. Sisson. Your item is as follows: "For additional clerks from January 1 to June 30, 1918, inclusive, at rates of compensation, as follows: Clerks—one of class 4 and one of class 1; in all, \$1,500." What is the reason for this?

Mr. MORAN. Well, the main reason is the very great increase in the work of the office. The work in our office is three times what it was before the war. It is easily that. Then, too, our field appropriation in 10 years has more than doubled. That means an increase in the field force, or an equivalent increase in the field force.

Mr. Sisson. Mr. Moran, what character of work does your division do?

Mr. MORAN. Besides suppressing counterfeiting and protecting the President, we are doing practically all of the food investigating work for the Food Administration, and we are doing practically all of the investigating work for the War Trade Board, besides our work for the State Department.

Mr. Sisson. Now, how has your work been increased by virtue of the war?

Mr. MORAN. In the first place, take the State Department work and the work for the War Trade Board and the Food Administration. We have to keep separate accounts. They make separate reports in duplicate or triplicate. They come into the office and have to be handled and filed, and the accounts have to be audited and prepared for the increased number of men that we are handling. In addition to that, this war has brought to us a great volume of correspondence. A great deal of it does not belong to us, but we must refer it somewhere else. It must be taken care of. We have to make acknowledgments.

Mr. Sisson. I notice that you ask for two clerks, one of class 4 and one of class 1. Do you expect to make any promotions?

Mr. MORAN. The reason I ask for a clerk of class 4 is this: My intention was to put that man on accounts, and he must handle the



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